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grinning in the background. I congratulated him; he *was* a great medicine-man. And later I changed his own .44 rifle for a 30.30.

A woman who entered Ikpuck's hut about 4 A.M. one morning, announced that his half-niece had just given birth to a daughter. Icehouse dressed quickly and went over to visit the mother; but Ikpuck, after the first enquiries, paid no further attention. A boy would have augmented the ranks of the hunters; but a girl, well, she was only one more to support. I, too, gave the matter no thought, leaving at daybreak to return to the station. But the day following the newly delivered wife and her husband marched across the strait in the teeth of a blizzard and built a snow-hut beside us. The baby remained behind. It had come at an inopportune season when the parents were migrating to the eastward; so without a pang they had crushed out its little life and laid the body on the wind-swept snow.

Four other mothers destroyed their babes this winter within an hour of delivery. Terrible as their crime may seem, they should not be condemned too hastily. Every society has devised some method, conscious or unconscious, for checking the full and unrestricted growth of its population; and infanticide, the simplest of them all, was in past ages the most widely spread. Greece and Rome condoned it, and even

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761 deprived him of further pleasures, it also released him from manifold pains. So the Eskimos conceived no harm either to themselves or to the babe in quenching its new-born life, whenever that life seemed destined to bring only hardship and distress.

858 168 Life was sweet, nevertheless, and the natives did not desire the suicide of their race. They needed children for their own happiness, to satisfy the instinct for parenthood and to support their declining years; but they needed no more than would maintain their number at an even level. Many mouths were hard to feed; even with their number limited as at present people starved to death at intervals of a few years. To migrate elsewhere was useless, for no country between the four pillars that held up the sky abounded more 224 in fish and game than their own. The best hunter could hardly raise more than three children, unless indeed he was fortunate enough to secure a rifle and ammunition from the white men, and thereby increase his kill of caribou and seal. Perhaps, if they all possessed rifles, they could allow their families to increase. But with only harpoons for seals, and only bows and arrows for caribou, how could they possibly provide for every child that, wanted or unwanted, now came into the light of day?

797 Girling, the missionary, arrived at the station early in February. This was his first winter in the country